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Agenda item 100 (b)

HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS, INCLUDING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Malta, Morocco, Nepal, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Poland, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Sweden, Ukraine and United States of America: draft resolution

Effective promotion of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 47/135 of 18 December 1992, in which it adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, as well as its resolution 48/138 of 20 December 1993,

Conscious of the need effectively to promote and protect the rights of persons belonging to minorities, as set out in the Declaration,

Welcoming Commission on Human Rights resolution 1994/22 of 1 March 1994 on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, 1/ in which the Commission, inter alia, requested the Secretary-General to present an analytical report at its next session,

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1/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1994, Supplement No. 4 (E/1994/24), chap. II, sect. A.

Noting that Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities resolution 1994/4 of 19 August 1994, is to be considered by the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-first session,

Aware of the provisions of article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 2/ concerning the rights of persons belonging to ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities,

Acknowledging that the United Nations has an increasingly important role to play regarding the protection of minorities by, inter alia, taking due account of and giving effect to the Declaration,

Concerned by the growing frequency and severity of disputes and conflicts concerning minorities in many countries, and their often tragic consequences,

Affirming that effective measures and the creation of favourable conditions for the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, ensuring effective non-discrimination and equality for all, contribute to the prevention and peaceful solution of human rights problems and situations involving minorities,

Considering that the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities contribute to political and social stability and peace and enrich the cultural heritage of society as a whole of the States in which such persons live,

Taking note of the work of the High Commissioner for National Minorities of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe,

Reaffirming the obligation of States to ensure that persons belonging to minorities may exercise fully and effectively all human rights and fundamental freedoms without any discrimination and in full equality before the law in accordance with the Declaration,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the effective promotion of the Declaration, 3/

Mindful of the recommendations contained in section II, paragraphs 25 to 27, of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 4/

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General on the effective promotion of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities;

2/ See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

3/ A/49/415 and Add.1.

4/ Report of the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 14-25 June 1993 (A/CONF.157/24 (Part I)), chap. III.

2. Urges States and the international community to promote and protect the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, as set out in the Declaration, including through the facilitation of their full participation in all aspects of the political, economic, social, religious and cultural life of society and in the economic progress and development in their country;

3. Urges States to take, as appropriate, all the necessary constitutional, legislative, administrative and other measures to promote and give effect to the principles contained in the Declaration;

4. Appeals to States to make bilateral and multilateral efforts, as appropriate, in order to protect the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities in their countries, in accordance with the Declaration;

5. Calls upon the Commission on Human Rights to examine as a matter of priority, ways and means to promote and protect effectively the rights of persons belonging to minorities, as set out in the Declaration;

6. Calls upon the Secretary-General to provide through the Centre for Human Rights of the United Nations Secretariat, at the request of Governments concerned and as part of the programme of advisory services and technical assistance of the Centre, qualified expertise on minority issues and human rights, as well as on the prevention and resolution of disputes, to assist in existing or potential situations involving minorities;

7. Requests the Secretary-General, in the implementation of the present resolution, to provide human and financial resources for such advisory services and technical assistance of the Centre for Human Rights, within existing resources;

8. Calls upon the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to promote, within his mandate, the implementation of the principles contained in the Declaration and to continue to engage in a dialogue with Governments concerned for that purpose;

9. Urges all treaty bodies and special representatives, special rapporteurs and working groups of the Commission on Human Rights and the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities to give due regard, within their respective mandates, to the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to minorities;

10. Invites the Secretary-General to continue the dissemination of information on the Declaration and the promotion of understanding thereof;

11. Encourages intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to continue to contribute to the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

12. Calls upon States and the Secretary-General respectively to give due regard to the Declaration in training programmes for officials;

13. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session on the implementation of the present resolution under the item entitled "Human rights questions".